

March 20, 2019

Saitama, Japan

Evgenia Tarasova / Vladimir Morozov (RUS) take Pairs Short Program

Russia's [Evgenia Tarasova/Vladimir Morozov](#) skated to the lead in the Pairs Short Program with the Chinese teams [Wenjing Sui/Cong Han](#) and [Cheng Peng/Yang Jin](#) following in second and third as the ISU World Figure Skating Championships 2019 opened in Saitama (JPN) on Wednesday.

Performing to Piano Concerto No. 2 by Sergei Rachmaninov, Tarasova/Morozov produced a side by side triple toe, high triple twist and throw triple loop and level-four for the twist, lift, death spiral and spin. They set a new seasons best with 81.21 points. "During the European Championships we had the same mistake both in short and free programs. Therefore, now we had to train harder not to allow this to happen anymore. We decided to make everything at our maximum," Tarasova said.

Sui/Han's performance to "No One Like You" by Red Electrick was highlighted by a triple twist, triple toeloop and throw triple flip. The 2018 Olympic silver medalists scored 79.24 points, a seasons best. "I am pretty satisfied with the short program. Yes, we had some mistakes at the beginning, and we will fix them once back at our home. But for now, the short program is over. We would like to perform at our best level for now at free program," Han told the press.

Cheng/Peng completed a triple toeloop, triple twist and throw triple loop in their routine to "Ophelia" by The Lumineers to earn 75.51 points. "I felt relaxed for the short program. We practiced hard until Worlds, and I think we did what we should be doing. At Four Continents, our performance was not ideal, so we went back, and made adjustments to the details. We want to skate our free program at the best of our abilities," Peng offered.

[Natalia Zabiiako/Alexander Enbert](#) (RUS) are not far behind in fourth place with a strong performance on 73.96 points. [Kirsten Moore-Towers/Michael Marinaro](#) (CAN) are also close in fifth on 73.08 points. 2019 European bronze medalists [Aleksandra Boikova/Dmitri Kozlovskij](#) (RUS) placed sixth (69.99 points). Following a crash in the warm up between Vanessa James and [Matteo Guarise](#) (ITA), 2019 European Champions [Vanessa James/Morgan Cipres](#) (FRA) had a rough performance. She fell on the throw triple flip while he doubled the toeloop. They came seventh (68.67 points). "I don't know what happened - I didn't see Matteo, Matteo didn't see me so we crashed and I fell. It took me off a little and I was not very comfortable after. I felt a little dizzy, so I tried to stay focused. It was a bad skate for us today, and with the fall it was very tiring after. It happened, it was a mistake and it affected the program as well as our concentration," James said.

The ISU World Figure Skating Championships continue today with the Ladies' Short Program. For more information, full entry lists and results please see the [ISU event website](#) and [official event website](#). Follow the discussion on social media by using the hashtag [#WorldFigure](#).

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